

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of a telephonic conference with Examiner Nguyen. Claims 1-19 are pending in the application. By the present amendment, claims 1, 3 and 11 have been proposed for amendment. No new matter has been added. Claims 20-29 have been canceled without prejudice. The Examiner's reconsideration in view of the amendment and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The Examiner has disclosed U.S. Patent Application No. 2002/0175695 to Ahmann et al. (hereinafter Ahmann) as teaching the present claims.

Ahmann is directed to a probe that includes a flexible substrate 27, probe lands or pads 30 which include tips 34 which create connections with a DUT. Ahmann fails to teach or suggest the present claims as originally filed or as amended.

Claim 1 has been amended to further clarify the present invention. Claim 1, now recited, *inter alia*, a substrate having a dielectric layer integrally formed thereon, the dielectric layer forming a rigid projected portion, which extends beyond an end of the substrate to overhang the substrate; and a plurality of conductive lines integrally formed on the projected portion, the conductive lines further extending beyond an end of the projected portion by a distance to overhang the projected portion and to form contact points, wherein the lines are connected to material of the projected portion to provide stiffness and the contact points provide flexibility during use.

The structure of Ahmann fails to disclose or suggest:

- 1) a dielectric layer integrally formed with a substrate

- 2) the dielectric layer forming a rigid projected portion
- 3) the rigid projected portion extends beyond an end of the substrate to overhang the substrate
- 4) a plurality of conductive lines integrally formed on the projected portion,
- 5) the conductive lines further extending beyond an end of the projected portion by a distance to overhang the projected portion
- 6) the lines are connected to material of the projected portion to provide stiffness
- 7) the plurality of conductive lines...extending beyond the projected portion without contacting the substrate.

Ahmann includes a flexible elastomeric interface 38, which is not integrally formed with the substrate nor is the elastomeric interface 38 or 238 (by definition) rigid. Claim 1 should be allowable for this reason alone. In addition, the elastomeric interface 38 does not extend beyond the substrate, in fact the opposite occurs, the substrate 27 extends beyond the elastomeric interface 38. Furthermore, conductive probe pads 30 are formed on the flexible substrate and not on a rigid projected portion which extends beyond the substrate as presently claimed. The conductive lines of the present claims further extend beyond the substrate and the projected portion. The conductive probe pads connect directly to the flexible substrate 27.

FIG. 2 of the present invention shows substrate 14 with a rigid dielectric layer 17 integrally formed on the substrate and extending past an end of the substrate. Conductive lines

12 are integrally formed on the dielectric layer and extend past the end of the dielectric layer by a distance 19. At the end of the conductive lines, contacts are formed.

Ahmann does not teach or suggest such a structure. The contacts or probe tips 34 do not extend past a substrate and in fact the substrate extends past the probe tips. In addition, the probe tips 34 of Ahmann do not provide flexibility as recited in claims 1 and 11. Instead, the elastomeric interface 38 or 238 provides flexibility. This is also contrary to the present claims where the dielectric layer provides stiffness. Stiffness in Ahmann is provided by a bulky probe head 36 and is completely different than the structure and teachings of the present invention.

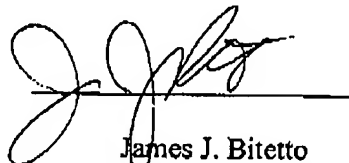
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all the claims now pending in the application are in condition for allowance. Early and favorable reconsideration of the case is respectfully requested.

Please call the undersigned to further discuss the case.

Respectfully submitted,

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